# DRAFT
# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

## THOMPSON FALLS STATE PARK
## POND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

April 2015

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

# Thompson Falls State Park
# Pond Improvement Project
# Draft Environmental Assessment
# MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

## PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of proposed state action:** Improvements to facilities and fish habitat at the Thompson Falls State Parks Family Fishing Pond.

2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

3. **Name of project:** Thompson Falls State Park Pond Improvement Project

4. **Project sponsor:**
   Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 1
   490 N. Meridian Road
   Kalispell, MT 59901

5. **Anticipated schedule:**
   Estimated construction/commencement date: Fall 2015
   Estimated completion date: Fall 2015
   Current status of project design: 25 %
   Estimated public comment period: May 22, 2015
   Estimated decision notice: June 1, 2015

6. **Location:** Sanders County, **T22N, R30W, Sec. 36, Lots 4 & 5**

**Figure 1. General Location of Thompson Falls State Park Pond Improvement Project**

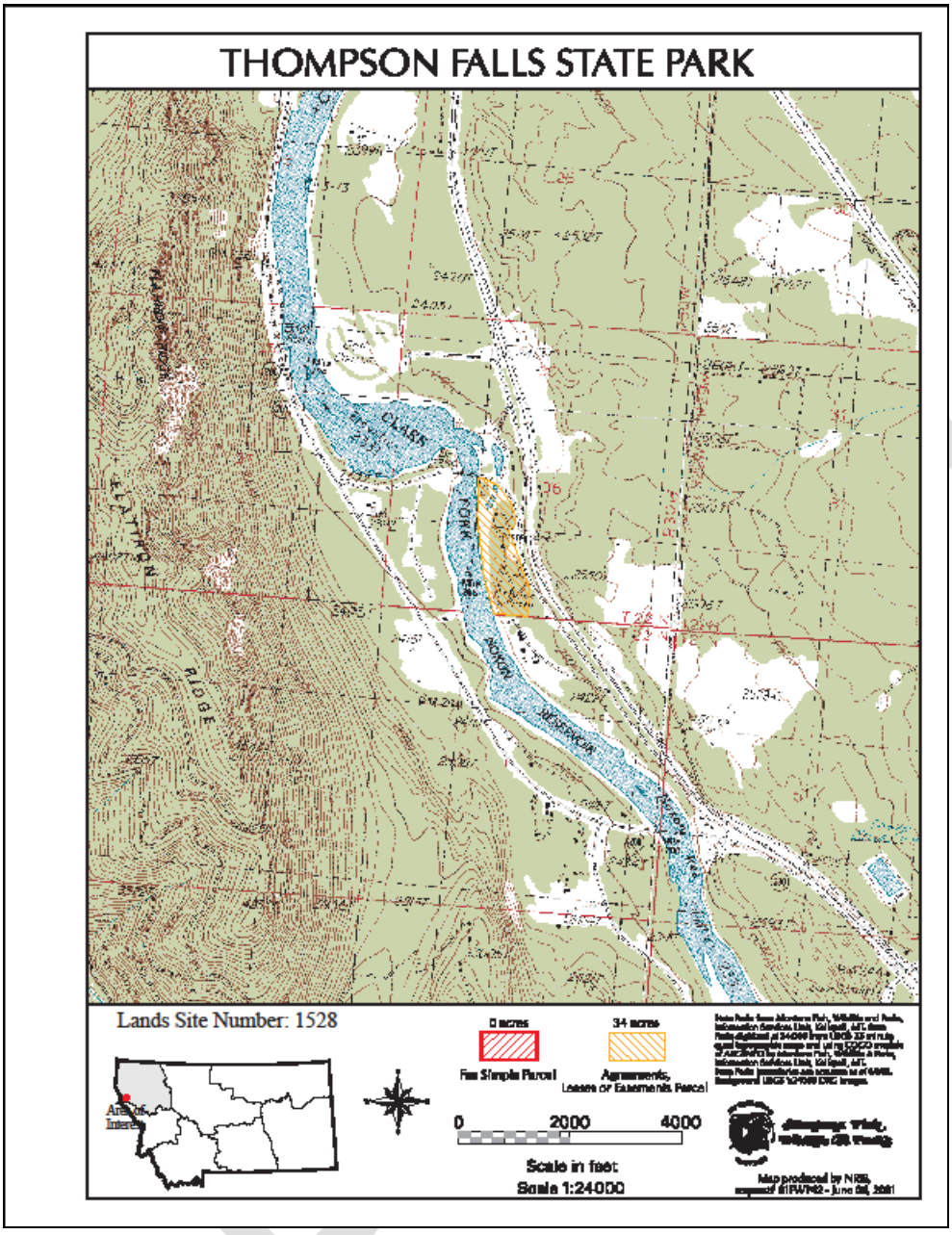
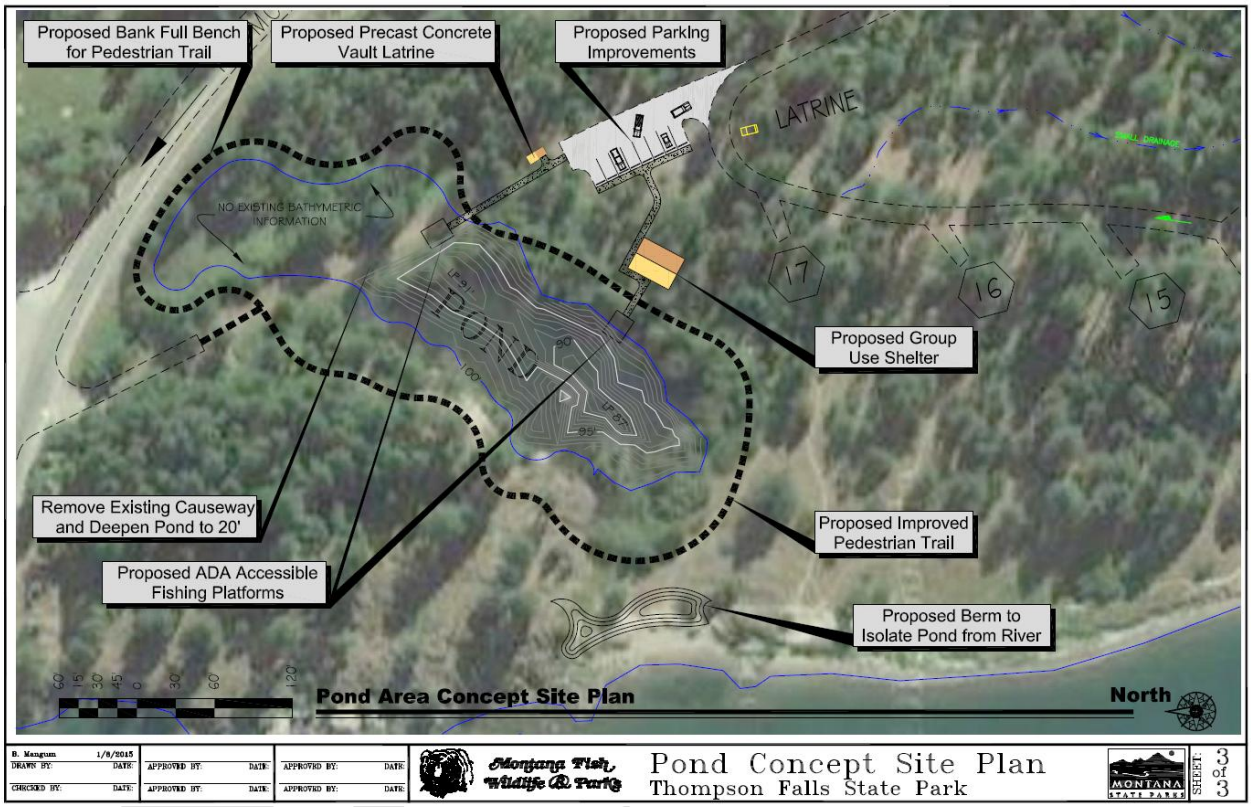


**Figure 2. Thompson Falls State Park Pond Improvement Project**



**7. Project size:**

| | Acres | | Acres |
|---|---|---|---|
| (a) Developed: | | (d) Floodplain | 3 |
| Residential | 0 | | |
| Industrial | 0 | (e) Productive: | |
| | | Irrigated cropland | 0 |
| (b) Open Space/ | 1 | Dry cropland | 0 |
| Woodlands/Recreation | | Forestry | 0 |
| (c) Riparian/Wetland | 1 | Rangeland | 0 |
| Areas | | Other | 0 |

* Approximate acreages.

**8. Local, state or federal agencies with overlapping or additional jurisdiction:**

**(a) Permits:**

Army Corp of Engineers – 404 Permit
Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality – 318 Permit
Sanders County Planning – Floodplain Development Permit

**(b) Funding:**

| Agency Name | Funding Amount |
|---|---|
| Avista Corporation | $208,071 |
| FWP Community Pond Grant | $10,000 |
| State Parks Division-FWP | $1,950 |

**(c) Other overlapping or additional jurisdictional responsibilities:**

| Agency Name | Type of Responsibility |
|---|---|
| Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation | Fee title holder |

**9. Narrative summary of the proposed action:**

The project proposal is a partnership between FWP and Avista Corp to enlarge the size of the existing family fishing pond at Thompson Falls State Park. The removal of approximately 8000 cubic yard of material would increase the surface area of the pond by approximately .4 acres to a total size of 1.1 acres. Work would include: removing a causeway (road prism) that currently divides the pond (75' of the road prism on either side of the pond would also be removed to fit within existing topography); deepening the pond to a maximum depth of 20 feet; improving vehicle parking near the pond; installing signage; and constructing a trail from the parking area to and around the enlarged pond. Re-vegetation of the site would take place as needed once excavation and construction is completed. Other proposed improvements include two universally accessible fishing platforms, a picnic shelter and vault latrine. This process would increase habitat within the pond, and improve access and recreational opportunities at the site.

The project is needed to improve access to the pond and enhance habitat within the pond, which would result in increased opportunity for successful fishing by visitors, including families and young anglers. Current access to the pond is a rough footpath that in areas is difficult for people with mobility challenges. Habitat within the pond is

divided by a large causeway that is 220' long, 24' wide, with side slopes that are 15' wide and 10' high. This causeway limits habitat for fish and restricts fishing potential.

The pond has been identified by the local fishery biologist and park manager as a priority for providing diversified fishing opportunities for the public that complement boat and shoreline angling on the two large reservoirs of the lower Clark Fork River (Noxon Rapids and Cabinet Gorge). Since 2001, the pond has been stocked each spring with approximately 500 rainbow trout to provide a seasonal fishery; this program has met with success, especially with young anglers. By improving access and the size of the pond, the project would increase fishing opportunity for people who already visit the pond and the State Park. Additionally, plans are underway to construct a pedestrian and bicycle trail that connects the town of Thompson Falls to the State Park; and the recent acquisition of a perpetual easement on the park's property by FWP is expected to result in a number of improvements at the park. It is therefore expected that visitor use at the park would increase, and the improved pond would be capable of providing accessible and enjoyable public recreational opportunities.

Total estimated cost for the project is $ 230,021. $208,071 of that sum has been committed by Avista Corp through the Clark Fork Settlement Agreement. An additional $10,000 has been secured through an FWP Fish Pond Grant. The remaining $1,950 would be provided by Montana State Parks through in-kind labor and material support.

## PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

**1. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:**

**Alternative A: No Action** – The improvements to the Thompson Falls State Park pond would not be accomplished.

If Alternative A is selected, the existing family fishing pond at Thompson Falls State Parks would continue to provide some fishing and recreational opportunity. The pond is stocked with approximately 500 trout each spring for park visitors. Present pond size and water depth limits the length of time each year that trout can thrive due to increasing water temperatures in late summer.

Access is presently limited to people with a high degree of mobility due to the nature of the pond's perimeter trail. Furthermore, the lack of developed fishing platforms preclude good access for visitors utilizing wheel chairs. The lack of parking for day use visitors to the pond is limited, requiring people to either park along the park's campground road or outside of the park on the Blue Slide Road. Neither is optimal.

**Alternative B: Proposed Action - Improve the Family Fishing Pond at Thompson Falls State Park.**

This alternative would enhance the existing pond by enlarging it by .4 acres and increasing the maximum depth by seven feet. Access would be substantially improved my providing an ADA compliant trail around the circumference of the

pond, adding two fishing platforms, and improving interior parking. Finally, visitor amenities would be improved to provide a small picnic shelter immediately adjacent to the pond for use by families and organizations. Overall recreational opportunities at Thompson Falls State Park would be significantly enhanced.

2. **Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:** Review conducted by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Montana Department of Environmental Quality.

## PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

**Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.**

## A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

| 1. LAND RESOURCES<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure? | | x | | | | |
| b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility? | | | x | | Yes | 1b |
| c. Destruction, covering, or modification of any unique geologic or physical features? | | x | | | | |
| d. Changes in siltation, deposition, or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream, or the bed or shore of a lake? | | x | | | | |
| e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard? | | x | | | | |

1b. Some fill material could be used on site for landscaping and trail construction and berming. The remainder would be disposed of in an approved location.

| 2. AIR<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13c.) | | x | | | | |
| b. Creation of objectionable odors? | | x | | | | |
| c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally? | | x | | | | |
| d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants? | | x | | | | |
| e. For P-R/D-J projects, would the project result in any discharge, which would conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.) | | x | | | | |

| 3. WATER<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality, including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity? | | | x | | | 3a |
| b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff? | | x | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows? | | | x | | | 3c |
| d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body? | | | | | | 3d |
| e. Exposure of people or property to water-related hazards such as flooding? | | x | | | | |
| f. Changes in the quality of groundwater? | | x | | | | |
| g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater? | | x | | | | |
| h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater? | | x | | | | |
| i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation? | | x | | | | |
| j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality? | | x | | | | |
| k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity? | | x | | | | |
| l. For P-R/D-J, would the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.) | | | x | | | See 3c |
| m. For P-R/D-J, would the project result in any discharge that would affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.) | | | x | | | See 3a |

3a. The proposed habitat improvements would temporarily increase turbidity in the pond during construction. A temporary turbidity permit (318) would be obtained from Montana Department of Environmental Quality prior to construction.

3c. There would be some changes to the existing floodplain of the Clark Fork River, but there would not be a change in overall floodplain capacity.

3d. Deepening of the pond would increase the size of an existing water body, which would improve angling opportunity.

| 4. VEGETATION<br>Would the proposed action result in? | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Changes in the diversity, productivity, or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)? | | | x | | Yes | 4a |
| b. Alteration of a plant community? | | | x | | Yes | 4b |
| c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species? | | x | | | | |
| d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land? | | x | | | | |
| e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds? | | x | | | | |
| f. For P-R/D-J, would the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland? | | x | | | | |

4a-b. Excavation and trail construction could slightly alter plant species and productivity. Revegetation and weed control efforts would help reduce potential impacts. However, this area is generally compacted from current visitor use, and pond improvements would help to direct use to hardened features.

| 5. FISH/WILDLIFE<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat? | | x | | | | |
| b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species? | | | x | | | 5b |
| c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species? | | | x | | | 5c |
| d. Introduction of new species into an area? | | x | | | | |
| e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals? | | x | | | | |
| f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species? | | x | | | | |
| g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest, or other human activity)? | | x | | | | |
| h. For P-R/D-J, would the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and would the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.) | | x | | | | |
| i. For P-R/D-J, would the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.) | | x | | | | |

5b and c: The habitat improvements within the pond would improve the survival of stocked fish within the pond and may increase the diversity and abundance of game and nongame fish and wildlife species.

## B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

| 6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Increases in existing noise levels? | | | x | | | 6a |
| b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels? | | x | | | | |
| c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property? | | x | | | | |
| d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation? | | x | | | | |

6a. During construction, noise would be minimally increased by construction equipment.
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| 7. LAND USE<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area? | | x | | | | |
| b. Conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance? | | x | | | | |
| c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action? | | x | | | | |
| d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences? | | x | | | | |

| 8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption? | | x | | | | |
| b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan? | | x | | | | |
| c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard? | | | x | | Yes | 8c |
| d. For P-R/D-J, would any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a.) | | x | | | | |

8c. Safety precautions for recreationists using the area during and after construction are the most important aspect of the project. Mitigation measures include closing the area during construction, placement of signs to warn people of potential hazards, and construction of safe slopes along the shoreline to reduce risk of falling or drowning.

| 9. COMMUNITY IMPACT<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area? | | x | | | | |
| b. Alteration of the social structure of a community? | | x | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income? | | x | | | | |
| d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity? | | x | | | | |
| e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods? | | | x | | | 9e |
| f. Other | | | x | | | 9f |

9e. Traffic hazards may be reduced by providing parking for people using the pond within Thompson Falls State Park instead of along Blue Slide Road at the exterior of the park.

9f. The facilities and pond improvements within the state park would improve recreational opportunities for the local community.

| 10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Would the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify. | | x | | | | |
| b. Would the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues? | | x | | | | |
| c. Would the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications? | | x | | | | |
| d. Would the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source? | | x | | | | |
| e. Define projected revenue sources | | | | | | 10e |
| f. Define projected maintenance costs. | | | | | | 10f |

10f. Thomson Falls State park has been managed and maintained by the Region One Parks Division since 1960. The park and family fishing pond is maintained year-round by the regional parks maintenance crew, with assistance from the park manager and park ranger. During the peak summer months, a full time park attendant is employed to provide visitor service and maintenance. Additionally, MCC crews and volunteers are frequently used for park maintenance projects. Maintenance operations are funded annually through state parks operating budgets, state parks major maintenance budgets and with assistance from Avista Corp. The current annual maintenance budget for the park is $8,150. It is anticipated that this project would increase maintenance needs by approximately $1,100 annually. Maintenance and upkeep projects would be eligible for supplemental funding through the Clark Fork Settlement Agreement mitigation program.

| 11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view? | | x | | | | |
| b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood? | | x | | | | |
| c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report.) | | | x | | | 11c |
| d. For P-R/D-J, would any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.) | | x | | | | |

11c: The pond improvements would improve the quality and quantity of recreational opportunities in Sanders County.

| 12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES<br>Would the proposed action result in: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure, or object of prehistoric historic or paleontological importance? | | x | | | | 12a |
| B .Physical change that would affect unique cultural values? | | x | | | | |
| c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area? | | x | | | | |
| d. For P-R/D-J, would the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.) | | x | | | | |

12a. Consultation with SHPO is pending and would be completed prior to construction.

## SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

| 13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE<br><br>Would the proposed action, considered as a whole: | IMPACT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Unknown | None | Minor | Potentially Significant | Can Impact Be Mitigated | Comment Index |
| a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.) | | x | | | | |
| b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur? | | x | | | | |
| c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard, or formal plan? | | x | | | | |
| d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts would be proposed? | | x | | | | |
| e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created? | | x | | | | |
| f. For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.) | | x | | | | |
| g. For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required. | | x | | | | 13g |

13g. 404 Permit.
Consultation with DEQ with potential need for discharge permit.

## PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

## PART V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. **Describe the level of public involvement for this project, if any, and, given the complexity and the seriousness of the environmental issues associated with the proposed action, is the level of public involvement appropriate under the circumstances?**

   The funding for the project would come from Avista Corp. (Avista). Avista implements the Clark Fork Settlement Agreement (CFSA) as part of its relicensing agreement mandated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Projects funded through the CFSA are reviewed and commented upon by a series of collaborative teams of agency and organization representatives and the mitigation Management Committee, The Management Committee must approve plans and Avista funding for proposals associated with implementing the CFSA. The Management Committee is comprised of 27 entities – Avista; federal, state (Montana and Idaho), and county governments and agencies; Indian tribes; and nongovernmental organizations.

   The public would be notified and input would be solicited in the following manners:

   - Two public notices in the local newspaper: the *Sanders County Ledger.*
   - Public notice on the Montana State Parks web page http://stateparks.mt.gov. and the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: *http://fwp.mt.gov*.
   - Direct notice would be given to adjacent landowners.
   - Copies of the draft EA would be available at the FWP Region 1 Headquarters in Kalispell and the FWP State Headquarters in Helena.
   - A news release would be prepared and distributed to a standard list of media outlets interested in FWP Region 1 issues.
   - Notice of this environmental assessment would be distributed to the neighboring landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project.

   This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated.

   If requested within the comment period, FWP would schedule and conduct a public meeting on this proposed project.

2. **Duration of comment period:**
   The public comment period would extend for thirty days, from xxx through xxx, 2015. Written comments would be accepted until 5:00 p.m., xxx, 2015, and can be e-mailed to or mailed to the address below:

Thompson Falls State Park Pond Improvement Project
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Region 1
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 752-5501

## PART VI. EA PREPARATION

**1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?** No. The appropriate level of analysis for this proposal is an Environmental Assessment (EA) and an EIS is not required. Based on this analysis, there are no significant impacts on the Physical or Human Environment.

**2. Persons responsible for preparing the EA:**

Dave Landstrom
Region 1 Parks Program Manager
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
dlandstroml@mt.gov
(406) 751-4574

Dave Bennetts
Park Management Specialist
490 North Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
dbennetts@mt.gov
(406) 751-4590

3. **List of agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:**
United States Army Corps of Engineers
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

**APPENDICES**

A. Tourism Report – Department of Commerce
B. Sanders County Weed Inventory
C. Native Species Report - Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP)

# APPENDIX A
## TOURISM REPORT
## MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) & MCA 23-1-110

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by MCA 23-1-110 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Carol Crockett, Grant Manager
Montana Office of Tourism -Department of Commerce
301 S. Park Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

**Project Name:** Thompson Falls State Park Pond Improvement Project

**Project Description:**

The project proposal is a partnership between FWP and Avista Corp to enlarge the size of the existing family fishing pond at Thompson Falls State Park. The removal of approximately 8000 cubic yard of material would increase the surface area of the pond by approximately .4 acres to a total size of 1.1 acres. Work would include: removing a causeway (road prism) that currently divides the pond (75' of the road prism on either side of the pond will also be removed to fit within existing topography); deepening the pond to a maximum depth of 20 feet; improving vehicle parking near the pond; installing signage; and constructing a trail from the parking area to and around the enlarged pond. Re-vegetation of the site would take place as needed once excavation and construction is completed. Other proposed improvements include two universally accessible fishing platforms, a picnic shelter and vault toilet. This process would increase habitat within the pond, and improve access and recreational opportunities at the site.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?
   NO **YES** If YES, briefly describe:

Yes, as described, this project has the potential to positively impact the tourism and recreation industry economy if properly maintained. We are assuming the agency has determined it has necessary funding for the on-going operations and maintenance once this project is complete.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?
   NO **YES** If YES, briefly describe:

Yes, as described, the project has the potential to improve quality and quantity of tourism and recreational opportunities if properly maintained. We are assuming the

agency has determined it has necessary funding for the on-going operations and maintenance once this project is complete.

Signature Carol Crockett, Grant Manager Date March 25, 2015

# APPENDIX B

## SANDERS COUNTY WEED DISTRICT WEED INVENTORY
## for Thompson Falls State Park

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Date:** | 8/31/2014 | | |
| **Time:** | 1:30pm | | |
| **Property Section:** | | Thompson Falls State Park | |
| **Property Owner:** | | State of Montana | **Acreage:** |
| **Location of Property:** | | Blueslide Road | 23 acres |
| | | | |
| **Type of Property:** | | | |
| **Name of Surveyor:** | | Jason Badger & Judson Shively | |
| | | | |
| **Weather Conditions:** | | | |
| | **Temp:** | | |
| | **Wind Direction:** | | |
| | **Wind Speed:** | | |
| | | | **% infestation** |
| **Weeds Identified:** | | **Priority 2B**: St. Johnswort | <1% |
| | | Houndstongue | <1% |
| | | Leafy Spurge | < 1% |
| | | Spotted Knapweed | <5% |
| | | Common Tansy | <1% |
| | | | |
| | | **Priority 2A:** Hawkweed | <1% |
| | | | |
| | | **Other weeds:** Bull Thistle | <1% |
| | | Common Mullein | <1% |
| | | Yarrow | <1% |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| **Recommendations:** | | Continue current treatment regime. | |
| | | Spray with Metcel and 2-4D | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | **Chemical** | **Application Rate** | |
| | Metcel | 2oz/acre | |
| Application Rate: | 2-4D | 32oz/acre | |
| | | | |

# Appendix C.

NATIVE SPECIES REPORT - MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM (MNHP)

## Sensitive Plants and Animals in the Vicinity of Thompson Falls State Park

Species of Concern Terms and Definitions

A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MNHP) element occurrence database (http://nris.mt.gov) indicates two occurrences of animal species listed as Threatened or Endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) within the vicinity of the proposed project, including bull trout (listed as Threatened by the USFWS and US Forest Service (USFS) and Special Status by Bureau of Land Management (BLM)) and grizzly bear (listed as Threatened by the USFWS and USFS and Sensitive by BLM). No occurrences of plant species listed as Threatened or Endangered were observed in the vicinity of Thompson Falls State Park. The search by MNHP indicated that other Montana animal Species of Concern have been observed in the vicinity of the proposed project, including: fisher, wolverine, brown creeper, Cassin's finch, Clark's Nutcracker, evening grosbeak, flammulated owl, northern goshawk, pacific wren, peregrine falcon, pileated woodpecker, varied thrush, and westslope cutthroat trout. The search by MNHP also indicated that Montana plant Species of Concern have been observed in the vicinity of the proposed project, including: tapertip onion, diamond Clarkia, North Idaho Monkeyflower, and Britton's dry rock moss.

**Montana Species of Concern.** The term **"Species of Concern"** includes taxa that are at-risk or potentially at-risk due to rarity, restricted distribution, habitat loss, and/or other factors. The term also encompasses species that have a special designation by organizations or land management agencies in Montana, including: Bureau of Land Management Special Status and Watch species; U.S. Forest Service Sensitive and Watch species; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Threatened, Endangered and Candidate species.

## Status Ranks (Global and State)

The international network of Natural Heritage Programs employs a standardized ranking system to denote global (**G** -- range-wide) and state status (**S**) (Nature Serve 2003). Species are assigned numeric ranks ranging from 1 (critically imperiled) to 5 (demonstrably secure), reflecting the relative degree to which they are "at-risk". Rank definitions are given below. A number of factors are considered in assigning ranks -- the number, size and distribution of known "occurrences" or populations, population trends (if known), habitat sensitivity, and threat. Factors in a species' life history that make it especially vulnerable are also considered (e.g., dependence on a specific Pollinator).

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Endangered Species Act)- Terms and Definitions

**LE. Listed endangered**: Any species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

**LT. Listed threatened:** Any species likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

**C. Candidate:** Those taxa for which sufficient information on biological status and threats exists to propose to list them as threatened or endangered.

**DM. Recovered, delisted, and being monitored** - Any previously listed species that is now recovered, has been delisted, and is being monitored.

**BGEPA. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940 (BGEPA)** prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from taking bald or golden eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. The BGEPA provides criminal and civil penalties for persons who take, possess, sell, purchase, barter, offer to sell, purchase or barter, transport, export or import, at any time or any manner, any bald eagle ... [or any golden eagle], alive or dead, or any part, nest, or egg thereof.

**MBTA. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)** implements four treaties that provide for international protection of migratory birds. The statute's language is clear that actions resulting in a "taking" or possession (permanent or temporary) of a protected species are a violation of the MBTA.

**BCC. Birds of Conservation Concern 2008.** The 1988 amendment to the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act mandates the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify species, subspecies, and populations of all migratory nongame birds that, without additional conservation actions, are likely to become candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act

| Status Ranks | |
|---|---|
| **Code** | **Definition** |
| **G1**<br>**S1** | At high risk because of extremely limited and/or rapidly declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it highly vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state. |
| **G2**<br>**S2** | At risk because of very limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, making it vulnerable to global extinction or extirpation in the state. |
| **G3**<br>**S3** | Potentially at risk because of limited and/or declining numbers, range, and/or habitat, even though it may be abundant in some areas. |
| **G4**<br>**S4** | Uncommon but not rare (although it may be rare in parts of its range), and usually widespread. Apparently not vulnerable in most of its range, but possibly cause for long-term concern. |
| **G5**<br>**S5** | Common, widespread, and abundant (although it may be rare in parts of its range). Not vulnerable in most of its range. |

**MFWP Conservation Need**. Under Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy of 2005, individual animal species are assigned levels of conservation need as follows:

**Tier I.** Greatest conservation need. Montana FWP has a clear obligation to use its resources to implement conservation actions that provide direct benefit to these species, communities and focus areas.

**Tier II.** Moderate conservation need. Montana FWP could use its resources to implement conservation actions that provide direct benefit to these species communities and focus areas.

**Tier III.** Lower conservation need. Although important to Montana's wildlife diversity, these species, communities and focus areas are either abundant or widespread or are believed to have adequate conservation already in place.

**Tier IV.** Species that are non-native, incidental or on the periphery of their range and are either expanding or very common in adjacent states.

## SENSITIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS IN THE VICINITY OF Thompson Falls State Park

**1. Martes pennanti (Fisher)**

*Vertebrate animal- Mammal* — *Habitat: Mixed conifer forest*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**: Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **2**

Element Occurrence data was reported of fisher within two miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2014.

**2. Ursus arctos (Grizzly Bear)**

*Vertebrate animal- Mammal* — *Habitat: Conifer Forest*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S2S3**
Global: **G4**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: **LT, XN**
U.S. Forest Service**: Threatened**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **1**

Element Occurrence data was reported of grizzly bear within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2013.

**3. Gulo gulo (Wolverine)**

*Vertebrate animal- Mammal* — *Habitat: Conifer Forest*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G4**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**: Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **2**

Element Occurrence data was reported of wolverine within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2013.

**4. Certhia americana (Brown Creeper)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Conifer Forest*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **2**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Brown Creeper within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2007.

**5. Haemorhous cassinii (Cassin's Finch)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Conifer Forest*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **3**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Cassin's Finch within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 1995.

**6. Nucifraga columbiana (Clark's Nutcracker)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Conifer Forest*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **3**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Clark's Nutcracker within two miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2007.

**7. Coccothraustes vespertinus (Evening Grosbeak)**

*Vertebrate animal- Amphibian* — *Habitat: Wetlands, floodplain pools*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **3**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Evening Grosbeak within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 1997.

**8. Psiloscops flammeolus (Flammulated Owl)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Riparian forest*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3B**
Global: **G4**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **1**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Flammulated Owl within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2006.

**9. Accipter gentilis (Northern Goshawk)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Grasslands*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **2**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Northern Goshawk within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2011.

**10. Troglodytes pacificus (Pacific Wren)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Grasslands*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **2**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Pacific Wren within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2007.

**11. Falco peregrinus (Peregrine Falcon)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Grasslands*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G4**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: **DM**
U.S. Forest Service**: Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **2**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Peregrine Falcon within two miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2013.

**12. Dryocopus pileatus (Pileated Woodpecker)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Grasslands*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **2**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Pileated Woodpecker within two miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2007.

**13. Ixoreus naevius (Varied Thrush)**

*Vertebrate animal- Bird* — *Habitat: Grasslands*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3B**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**:**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **3**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Varied Thrush within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2007.

**14. Salvelinus confluentus (Bull Trout)**

*Vertebrate animal- Fish* — *Habitat: Mountain streams, rivers, and lakes*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S2**
Global: **G4**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: **LT**
U.S. Forest Service: **Threatened**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Special Status**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **1**

Bull Trout do utilize the Clark Fork River adjacent to Thompson Falls State Park but do not inhabit the fishing pond within the park.

**15. Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi (Westslope Cutthroat Trout)**

*Vertebrate animal- Fish* — *Habitat: Mountain streams, rivers, and lakes*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S2**
Global: **G4T3**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service: **Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management: **Sensitive**

FWP CFWCS Tier: **1**

Westslope Cutthroat Trout do utilize the Clark Fork River adjacent to Thompson Falls State Park but do not inhabit the fishing pond within the park.

**16. Allium acuminatum (Tapertip Onion)**

*Plant* — *Habitat:*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S2G3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**: Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **0**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Tapertip Onion within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2007.

**17. Clarkia rhomboidea (Diamond Clarkia)**

*Plant* — *Habitat:*

Natural Heritage Ranks
State: **S3**
Global: **G5**

Federal Agency Status:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:
U.S. Forest Service**: Sensitive**
U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **0**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Diamond Clarkia within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 1998.

**18. Mimulus clivicola (North Idaho Monkeyflower)**

Vascular Pla*nt* — *Habitat:*

Natural Heritage Ranks — Federal Agency Status:

State: **S2** — U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

Global: **G4** — U.S. Forest Service**: Sensitive**

U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **0**

Element Occurrence data was reported of North Idaho Monkeyflower within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2011.

**19. Grimmia brittoniae (Britton's dry rock moss)**

*Bryophytes* — *Habitat:*

Natural Heritage Ranks — Federal Agency Status:

State: **S2** — U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:

Global: **G2** — U.S. Forest Service**: Sensitive**

U.S. Bureau of Land Management:

FWP CFWCS Tier: **0**

Element Occurrence data was reported of Britton's dry rock moss within three miles of the project area. Last recorded observation date was 2008.